

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT

SUBJ: FOREIGN POLICY SECTIONS OF MALTESE ELECTION
MANIFESTOES

REF: VALLETTA 0984

1. THE LABOR AND NATIONALIST PARTIES HAVE FORMALLY APPROVED THEIR RESPECTIVE MANIFESTOES FOR THE CURRENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN, AND EXCERPTS FROM THE MANIFESTOES ARE BEING PUBLISHED BY THE LOCAL PRESS. OFFICIAL VERSIONS WILL BE RELEASED BY THE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS LATER THIS WEEK. FOLLOWING IS AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY SECTION OF EACH PARTY'S ELECTORAL PROGRAM.

2. THE LABOR PARTY MANIFESTO OFFERS TWO "OPTIONS" FOR THE
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FUTURE STATUS OF MALTA AFTER THE MILITARY FACILITIES

AGREEMENT WITH THE BRITISH EXPIRES ON MARCH 31, 1979. BOTH OPTIONS ARE PREDICATED ON "NON-ALIGNMENT WITH EITHER OF THE SUPER-POWERS". THE FIRST OPTION WOULD BE SEPARATE BILATERAL DEFENSE PACTS AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WHICH THE LABOR PARTY "FEELS WOULD BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST." THE MANIFESTO STATES THAT THROUGH "CORRESPONDENCE IN THE POSSESSION OF THE GOVERNMENT", THE LABOR PARTY WAS ASSURED THAT THIS OPTION COULD BE FOLLOWED "WITHOUT THE NEED OF FURTHER STUDY". (COMMENT: ALTHOUGH UNSTATED, THIS OPTION CLEARLY IS DESIGNED TO COVER THE MUTUAL DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC PACT WHICH MINTOFF CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN OFFERED BY QADHAFI. END COMMENT).

3. THE LABOR PARTY'S SECOND OPTION IS REFERRED TO AS "NEARER TO THE HEART OF THE MALTESE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT." THIS IS ONE UNDER WHICH MALTA WOULD OBTAIN A GUARANTEE FROM "NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES" BINDING THEM TO INTERVENE IF MALTA WERE ATTACKED BY FOREIGN POWERS. FROM THESE COUNTRIES, MALTA ALSO WOULD OBTAIN A PROMISE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION SO THAT THE ISLAND WOULD NOT "SUFFER ECONOMICALLY WHEN THE ECONOMY IS CHANGED TO ONE OF PEACE AFTER MARCH 1979". IN EXCHANGE, MALTA WOULD BIND ITSELF NOT TO ALIGN ITSELF WITH EITHER OF THE "TWO SUPER-POWERS" AND PROHIBIT FOREIGN MILITARY BASES ON THE ISLAND. (COMMENT: THIS OPTION COVERS MINTOFF'S PROPOSED "TREATY" GUARANTEEING THE "NEUTRALITY AND INITIAL ECONOMIC VIABILITY" OF MALTA AFTER 1979. THE LABOR MANIFESTO GOES ON TO CLAIM THAT ITALY, LIBYA AND ALGERIA "WELCOMED AND SUPPORTED" THE GOM'S "INITIATIVE" TOWARD THIS OPTION, THAT FRANCE WAS "SYMPATHETICALLY AND CLOSELY EXAMINING IT", AND THAT YUGOSLAVIA AND TUNISIA ALSO HAD "PROMISED SUPPORT" FOR IT. END COMMENT).

4. THE NATIONALIST PARTY MANIFESTO STATES THAT A NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT WOULD GUARANTEE MALTA'S SECURITY BY AN AGREEMENT WITH COUNTRIES SHARING THE PARTY'S "IDEAS AND IDEALS OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY", BUT THAT MALTA'S FUTURE SECURITY SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON "RENTING THE COUNTRY AS A BASE FOR FOREIGN POWERS OR MILITARY BLOCS". AT THE SAME TIME, THE NATIONALISTS WOULD BE PREPARED TO ENTER INTO BILATERAL TREATIES OF FRIENDSHIP, NON-AGGRESSION AND COOPERATION WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALL COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, SO AS TO CONTINUE TO "GUARANTEE PEACE AND STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND COOPERATION." THE NATIONALISTS STATE THEY ALSO FAVOR STRENGTHENED TIES WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND "THE GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IN MALTA'S DEVELOPMENT." (COMMENT: THE MANIFESTO APPARENTLY MAKES NO SPECIFIC MENTION OF NATO, ALTHOUGH NATIONALIST LEADERS HAVE FREQUENTLY ADVOCATED "CLOSER NATO

TIES" AT PUBLIC MEETINGS. END COMMENT).

5. COMMENT: THE MANIFESTOES OF BOTH PARTIES, AT LEAST IN THE FOREIGN POLICY AREA, ARE CONSIDERABLY LESS FORTHCOMING THAN MANY OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE ON THIS SUBJECT BY THE RESPECTIVE PARTY LEADERS. WHEN IT CAME TO PUTTING IT DOWN ON PAPER, THE TWO PARTIES' FOREIGN POLICY PROPOSALS BECAME RATHER GENERAL AND EVEN SOMEWHAT VAGUE. THE PRESS HAS BEEN MORE DIRECT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE "TIMES OF MALTA" INTERPRETS THE TWO MANIFESTOES AS A CHOICE BETWEEN THE LABORITES AND THEIR "RADICAL ARAB FRIENDS" AND THE NATIONALISTS AND THEIR "WESTERN EUROPEAN AND NATO FRIENDS". IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE MALTESE ELECTORATE WILL MAKE SUCH A CLEAR DISTINCTION AND, IF SO, WHICH ALTERNATIVE THEY WILL PREFER. END COMMENT.
WIGGINS

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